



MCMINNVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY NEWS | FALL 2023



MSD's "Grow Your Own" program includes Mac High Education interns (from left) Makayla Anderson, Maria Raya, Abigail Mendoza Flores, Emily Murrow, Kendra Garrettson, Camila Virgen, Brooke Zollinger, Andrea Guzman and Molly Ryan. See story inside.

Mac High's Fire Engine Pulls In Students

The pipeline for qualified firefighters to staff local stations has gotten bigger over the past year.

Mac High has been training students to become firefighters for years. Both Lafayette and McMinnville have firefighters who graduated from the program and many have worked wildland fires during the summers.

But the program got a boost last year with the acquisition of a real fire engine. The engine is in great shape, but was underused because it has a seven-speed standard transmission.

The engine has been a game changer, according to Bob Sutton, a retired firefighter who teaches the Fire & Emergency Services Pathway. "For pathway students to learn the skills of a job, but not have the tools to do the job, does not paint the whole picture," he said. "You have to have an engine to learn how to do a true hose pull."

Students not only learn how to pull hoses, which is a fundamental skill for firefighting, but they also get a look at some real-life, mundane parts of the job. Learning to maintain the equipment, doing apparatus checks, and washing and polishing the vehicles are not exciting tasks, but are crucial parts of the work, said Sutton.

Since the engine arrived, Sutton's skills classes have increased almost tenfold, and over 200 students overall are taking fire services classes.

Another lure for students has been the equipment, including self contained breathing apparatus, donated by Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, and increased access to skills training with extrication tools, commonly known as the "Jaws of Life."

Students can get extra practice in a new after-school club, which is working toward the USASkills championships next spring. USASkills is a national Career & Technical Student Organization that enhances school-based and work-related learning through competitions and leadership development.

Students can emerge from the pathway with college credits and numerous Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs), which aren't enough to get them in the door as a paid firefighter, but it gives students a big head start over other applicants, said Sutton. The skills needed for these certifications can also get students into a department as a volunteer, which can lead to a professional firefighting career.

MSD Grows its Own Workforce

To face the growing national teacher shortage, MSD is building its future workforce with the help of a state “Grow Your Own” grant. The funds are intended to help staff members who already work in schools become licensed teachers and recruit and train high school students who are interested in teaching.

To enlist students, the district turned to Mac High’s Education Pathway and launched a new, paid internship program. Not only do students get valuable classroom experience, but they also learn about the professional hiring experience, which includes filling out a job application, undergoing the interview process and participating in onboarding activities.

The internship program placed 13 high school students in MSD classrooms alongside veteran teachers for a hands-on teaching experience. Starting in September and running



Senior Molly Ryan works in Paige Petersen's third grade classroom during math at Willamette Elementary.

through May, the students will spend two to three hours a week working directly with students.

As the daughter of a district kindergarten teacher, Molly Ryan always thought she would teach, too. “I love seeing the joy on students’ faces (past and present) when they run into my mom outside of the classroom,” she said. The internship is giving her a real-life look at what it takes to teach and has solidified her desire to pursue that path.

The “Grow Your Own” initiative is a partnership with Linfield University, Chemeketa Community College and the Willamette Education District.



Bilingual Andrea Guzman is able to work with both English- and Spanish-speaking students.

Teacher of the Year!

Patton Middle School STEM teacher Michele Reschly was surprised this fall with the news that she had been named one of Oregon’s Regional Teachers of the Year. Reschly was one of just 17 teachers named across the state selected from a pool of more than 30,000 Oregon public school teachers.

With a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Chemical Engineering, Reschly’s career path began in that field. Her entry into teaching was gradual, beginning with volunteering in her children’s schools and helping with science activities. She has been teaching at Patton for 10 years and has also served the district in summer STEM camps, robotics team coaching and more.

Reschly grew up in McMinnville, the daughter of well-known physician Dr. Gary Reschly and Sue Reschly. Sue served two terms on the McMinnville School Board in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Michele attended Patton and says she feels very much at home with middle school students.

The honor included a \$1,000 cash prize from the Oregon Lottery. Go to bit.ly/48OOKxZ for a video of the event.

Afterschool Activities

This year, the district expanded middle school athletics offerings to help provide healthy activities for students and build connections that encourage students to invest more in school.

The new offerings include competitive soccer and basketball for both boys and girls in grades 7-8 and a wrestling club for students in all grades. The new sports join the existing lineup of football, volleyball, fall cross country and spring track.

This fall, participation increased with nearly 40 percent of 7th-8th graders staying after school to compete in sports.

Students who stay for clubs or homework help add to the number of students who are involved in safe, engaging activities after school.

Student athletes must follow academic, attendance and behavior expectations in order to play, which can help create positive habits and skills for high school and life beyond.

Partnership Honored

Mac High and McMinnville Water & Light (MW&L) were recently recognized with the McMinnville Workforce Partnership of the Year Award from the McMinnville Economic Development Partnership (MEDP).

The honor celebrates collaborative efforts to provide real-world, paid work experience for students. The initiative featured seven students in MHS's engineering and fabrication pathways working together to design and build three mobile water filtration trailers for emergency use.

The students worked for weeks on the project and used engineering software to visualize and plan the interior, and other students used their welding skills to create and build the necessary components to outfit the trailers.

The award recognizes the community's commitment to workforce development and the district's goal to offer students more opportunities for local work experiences.



Superintendent's Corner

This school year we are launching a three-year strategic plan. Created with the input of students, staff, families and the community, the plan is built on the four pillars of academic excellence, student and staff wellness, family and community engagement, and safety. Some specific goals include:

Attendance – A wealth of data shows the correlation between attendance and achievement and not just for the absent students. Students who attend regularly are affected when instruction has to be adjusted for those who have missed classes. Learning to show up every day can create good attendance habits that carry over into college and the working world.

We are working on various strategies to bring out attendance rates back up to the 90+ marks.

Career and technical education/partnerships – In addition to our 16 Career Pathway programs, we have just launched a new partnership with Chemeketa Community College to offer a Medical Assisting certification. Students can come out of high school qualified to join this fast-growing field or use it as a stepping stone to another industry job.

Safety – We are working on our second annual Safety Summit, scheduled for early spring 2024. Working with local partners, we plan to offer sessions on the dangers of fentanyl, suicide prevention, school threats, child abuse and more. All community members are welcome to join us.

I'm excited to welcome Dave Furman, the new principal of McMinnville High School. Dave comes to us with abundant experience in big school administration, most recently at Beaverton High School. He's moved to McMinnville with his young family and is settling in at Mac High.

I'd also like to welcome our two new members to the board, Lu Ann Anderson and Doris Towery, who have both come forward with a strong desire to serve the students of this district.

Debbie Brockett



McMinnville SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Local Partner

Did you know that McMinnville High School students who earn a 3.5 grade point average or better can qualify for a full tuition scholarship at any Chemeketa Community College campus?

The Chemeketa Scholar program includes any course of study, including career technical classes. Over the past ten years, nearly 300 Mac High graduates have participated in the program, resulting in a total tuition savings of \$1,272,959.



Mac High's Fire & Emergency Services Pathway is growing and so is its inventory of professional level equipment, including a real fire engine. See story page 1.



MSD School Board members visited schools across the district during National School Lunch Week in October. Pictured: Larry Vollmer, who often visits Buel Elementary and makes time to listen to students during lunch time.

You're Invited!

The McMinnville Education Foundation is hosting a dinner fundraiser on February 10, 2024 at the Bindery in McMinnville. The event will support literacy, science, art and teacher-requested classroom activities in district schools.

The fun evening will feature fine dining, wine pairings and an auction. Tickets will be available at www.mac40kids.org/



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McMinnville School District will honor, empower and prepare each individual to thrive and contribute.